

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W

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P R 031450Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5088

INFO AMEMBASSY SANA'A

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 3 JIDDA 4282

EXDIS

DEPT PASS SECDEF FOR ISA

DHAHRAN PASS CHUSMTM

EO 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: MARR, MASS, SA, YE, JO

SUBJ: MILITARY ASSISTANCE PLANNING FOR YAR

REF: (A) STATE 153922; (B) JIDDA 3362; (C) JIDDA 3378;

(D) JIDDA 4120; (E) SANA'A 1899; (F) AMMAN 5189

SUMMARY: PRINCE SULTAN CONTINUES TO REQUEST US COMMENTS
ON QABBANI PLAN FOR IMPROVEMENT OF YAR'S MILITARY DEFENSES.
QABBANI'S PROPOSALS ILL-CONCEIVED AND EXCESSIVELY LARGE
FROM START AND HAVE IN ANY CASE BEEN MUCH OVERTAKEN BY
MILITARY AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN YEMEN. BELIEVE
THEREFORE TIME HAS COME TO GIVE SULTAN A REPLY THAT WILL
(A) LAY QABBANI PLAN DECENTLY TO REST, AND (B) INDICATE
TO SAG APPROPRIATE LINES OF FUTURE MILITARY DEVELOPMENT
FOR YEMEN. THESE SHOULD STRESS FIRST IMPORTANCE THAT MUST
BE GIVEN TO IMPROVING AND DEVELOPING YEMENI ARMY. IN VIEW
OF SIGNIFICANT AMOUNTS OF MATERIEL THAT ARMY HAS RECEIVED
AND WILL BE RECEIVING, BELIEVE THAT EMPHASIS SHOULD BE GIVEN
TO UPGRADING TRAINING AND ORGANIZATION OF SELECTED YAR UNITS.
THIS CAN BE DONE IN SAUDI ARABIA, AND WE WOULD RECOMMEND USE
OF JORDANIAN INSTRUCTORS TO AVOID ANY LOSS OF MOMENTUM TO

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DEVELOPMENT OF SAA'S OWN POTENTIAL. YEMENI AIR FORCE SHOULD
BE BUSY DIGESTING ITS LATEST SOVIET-ORIGIN EQUIPMENT FOR
THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE. USG PREPARED, HOWEVER, TO DISCUSS
AT SOME FUTURE TIME WITH SAG POSSIBLE CONVERSION OF YEMEN

AIR FORCE TO WESTERN TRAINING/EQUIPMENT. IMPLEMENTATION OF SUCH CONVERSION, HOWEVER, SHOULD NOT PRECEDE NORMAL FADE-OUT DATES FOR LATEST ACQUISITIONS. YEMENI'S NEEDS FOR A NAVY ARE MINIMAL; A SURVEY BY USAID COAST GUARD ADVISORS STATIONED IN SAUDI ARABIA COULD BE DONE, LEADING TO IMPLEMENTATION THROUGH A CONTRACTOR OS SOME SMALL COAST GUARD-TYPE NAVAL CAPABILITY FOR YARG. WE SHOULD STRESS THAT NO FINANCING AVAILABLE FROM USG, AND THAT OUR INVOLVEMENT RESTRICTED TO PROVISION OF EQUIPMENT AND CERTAIN MTT'S ON FMS CASH BASIS AND TO ROLE AS REGIONAL COORDINATOR OF YARG'S REQUESTS. (OUR ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE, HOWEVER, IS CONSIDERABLE AND HAS TOTLED ALMOST 32 MILLION DOLLARS IN PAST FIFTEEN MONTHS.) GOJ PROPOSALS FOR TECHNICAL AND MILITARY ASSISTANCE APPEAR WELL-CONCEIVED; HOWEVER, THEY SHOULD BE PRESENTED TO SAG BY YARG. END SUMMARY.

1. EIGHT WEEKS HAVE PASSED SINCE AMBASSADOR THACHER PRESENTED TO MODA PRINCE SULTAN DEPATMENT'S PRELIMINARY REACTION TO QABBANI PLAN (REF A); SULTAN MEANWHILE CONTINUES TO ASK US FOR OUR FURTHER VIEWS (REF B), AND WE CAN EXPECT THAT HE WILL CONTINUE DOING SO IF ONLY TO KEEP THE NEGOTIATING UPPER HAND AS HE PRESSES US ON OTHER MATTERS. (IN POINT OF FACT, INTENSITY OF HIS CONCERN OVER SITUATION IN YEMEN MAY BE DIMINISHING SOMEWHAT SINCE RECENTLY HE HAS TAKEN TO USING HIS NEEDLE RATHER THAN CLUB.) AT SAME TIME, EMBASSY RECOGNIZES THAT QABBANI REPORT -- WHICH ILL CONSIDERED AND TOO LARGE FROM TART -- HAS IN MANY RESPECTS NOW BEEN OVERTAKEN BY RECENT DEVELOPMENTS ON MILITARY SIDE. IT WOULD SEEM APPROPRIATE AND TIMELY, THEREFORE, TO GIVE SULTAN REPLY HE HAS BEEN AWAITING, IN A MANNER WE HOPE WILL (A) LAY QABBANI REPORT DECENTLY TO REST AND (B) FOCUS SAUDI THINKING ON SOME PRACTICAL STEPS IN MIDDLE TERMS THAT CAN BE TAKEN. THE STRICTLY LIMITED NATURE OF ANY US PARTICIPATION IN ARMS ASSISTANCE TO THE YAR SHOULD BE EMPHASIZED. IN CONSIDERING HOW A QUESTION OF MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO YAR SHOULD BE ADDRESSED, EMBASSY HAS HAD BENEFIT OF COUNSEL BY COL. GEORGE MALONEY OF DOD/ISA, AND DCM DAVID NEWTON FROM AMEMBASSY

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SANA.

2. ACCORDINGLY, EMBASSY SUGGESTS THAT A PRESENTATION BE MADE TO PRINCE SULTAN ALONG FOLLOWING LINES:

(A) QABBANI PLAN: WE WISH FIRST TO UNDERLINE ONCE AGAIN THAT QABBANI PLAN HAD NOT BEEN ENDORSED BY USG, AND THAT AS STATED BY AMBASSADOR THACHER (REF B), IT HAD BEEN OUR INITIAL REACTION THAT PLAN -- WHICH CALLED FOR EXPENDITURES EXCEEDING 700 MILLION DOLLARS -- EXCEPTIONALLY LARGE AND ELABORATE IN VIEW OF YARG'S POVERTY, AND INABILITY OF YEMEN ARMED FORCES (YAF) QUICKLY TO ABSORB LARGE QUANTITIES OF SOPHISTICATED MATERIEL AND TRAINING TO ACCOMPANY. IT APPEARS

TO USG, MOREOVER, THAT WHILE STUDY OF PLAN IN REVIEW, A NUMBER OF SIGNIFICANT MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS OCCURRED THAT MUST AFFECT OUR ASSESSMENT OF HOW YARG AND YAF CAN BEST BE HELPED. THESE ARE (1) EMERGENCY SHIPMENTS OF ARMS TO YEMEN BY SAG, JORDAN, AND PROSPECT OF ADDITIONAL EARLY SHIPMENTS FROM USG TO BE FINANCED BY ABU DHABI (AND PERHAPS TO BE DELIVERED ON THEIR FINAL LEG TO SANAA VIA SAUDI AIR FORCE); (2) AGREEMENT TO PROVIDE SIGNIFICANT QUANTITY OF TANKS, AIRCRAFT, RADAR SETS, ARTILLERY, ETC., FROM UAR IN AMOUNT EXCEEDING 80 MILLION DOLLARS; AND (3) A SOMEWHAT MORE FIRM AND STABLE POLITICAL SITUATION IN YEMEN, FOR WHICH SAG MUST OF COURSE RECEIVE DUE CREDIT. QABBANI REPORT NEVERTHELESS IS REGARDED AS A TIMELY AND CONSTRUCTIVE PLANNING RESPONSE TO WHAT APPEARED AN EMERGENCY SITUATION AT THE TIME; IT HAS PROVEN OF CINTINUING VALUE IN SUGGESTING LINE OF SUBSEQUENT CONSIDERATIONS, MANY OF WHICH ARE REFLECTED BELOW.

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
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P R 031450Z OCT 73
FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5089
INFO AMEMBASSY SANAA
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 3 JIDDA 4282

EXDIS

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DHAHRAN PASS CHUSMTM

(B) FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF YEMENI ARMY: BELIEVE IMPROVEMENT OF YEMENI ARMY SHOULD HAVE TOP PRIORITY AMONG PROGRAMS FOR YAR'S MILITARY BETTERMENT. IN VIEW, MOREOVER, OF CONSIDERABLE QUANTITIES OF EQUIPMENT AND AMMUNITION THAT ARMY HAS RECEIVED (OR MAY SOON RECEIVE) BELIEVE INTENSIVE EFFORTS CALLED FOR IN ARMY'S TRAINING, BASIC EQUIPMENT AND ORGANIZATION. ACCORDINGLY, TO THIS END THERE COULD BE ESTABLISHED WITHIN SAUDI ARABIA (PERHAPS AT KHAMIS MUSHAIT) SAUDI FACILITY FOR REFRESHER TRAINING OF YAR SMALL UNITS, SUCH AS SQUADS, PLATOONS AND COMPANIES. THESE UNITS COULD

BE BROUGHT UP TO STRENGHT, AND GIVEN SHORT BASIC COURSES IN WEAPONS AND TACTICS. THEY COULD BE OUTFITTED WITH NEW UNIFORMS AND ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT AND RETURNED TO YAR AS GREATLY IMPROVED UNITS. (IT MIGHT BE WELL TO BEGIN BY SELECTING FOR SUCH UPGRADING, YAF UNITS IN SOUTH CENTRAL AND SOUTHEAST FRONTIER AREAS WHICH HAVE BEEN OBJECT OF PDRY TERROR.) SAG MAY WISH TO EMPLOY JORDANIAN OFFICERS AND NCO'S FOR SUCH REFRESHER TASKS. IF SAG IS AGREEABLE, JORDANIANS SHOULD BE ASKED TO PREPARE PLAN TO COVER SUCH TRAINING AND RE-EQUIPPING. UNIT TRAINING COULD BE SUPPLEMENTED BY TRAINING OF YEMENI OFFICERS AND NCO'S IN SAUDI AND/OR JORDANIAN SERVICE SCHOOLS. USG BELIEVES IT

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MOST IMPORTANT THAT ANY EFFORTS TO IMPROVE YEMEN'S MILITARY POSTURE SHOULD NOT IN ANY WAY DETRACT FROM PRIMARY US GOAL OF ACHIEVING MAXWMUM SAUDI MILITARY DEVELOPMENT IN HUMAN AND TECHNICAL FIELDS AS REPIDLY AS POSSIBLE.

SECOND, A TRAINING DETACHMENT (PERHPAS OF JORDANIANS) SHOJLD BE SET UP TO INSPECT AND ADVISE UNITS OF YAR REMAINING IN YEMEN. WE UNDERSTAND JORDAN IS PREPARED TO SEND TO THE YAR JUST SUCH A MILITARY MISSION BUT LACKS THE FUNDS TO FINANCE THE PROJECT.

THIRD, A TECHNICAL SURVEY OF YAR MAINTENENCE CAPABILITIES IN ALL SERVICES SHOULD OCCUR SOON. THE JORDANIAN REME HAVE EXCELLENT MAINTENANCE STANDARDS AND ARE WELL QUALIFIED TO DO THIS. A SAUDI CONTRIBUTION WOULD, OF COURSE, BE POSSIBLE BASED UPON MODA'S EXPERIENCES WITH FIRST THE MOBILITY PROGRAM AND MORE RECENTLY THAT OF THE ORDNANCE CORPS. ONCE AGAIN, HOWEVER, WE WOULD NOT WISH TO SEE YEMENI DEVELOPMENT TAKE PLACE AT THE EXPENSE OF POSSIBLE FURTHER PROGRESS WITHIN MODA ITSELF.

(C) YEMENI AIR FORCE: THE QUANTITIES OF AIRCRAFT THAT YEMENIS INFORM US THEY (THANKS TO SAG) EXPECT TO RECEIVE FROM EGYPT, SHOULD ABSORB FOR FORESEEABLE FUTURE YEMENI AIR FORCE'S EXISTING RESOURCES OF PILOTS AND TECHNICAL PERSONNEL. USG STILL CONSIDERS IT DESIRABLE THAT YEMENI AIR FORCE ULTIMATELY LOOK TO REORGANIZATION, REEQUIPMENT AND TRAINING ALONG ESTERN LINES; YEMENI REEQUIPMENT, HOWEVER, SHOULD NOT BE PHASED IN BEFORE EXPIRY OF USEFUL OPERATING LIFE OF NEWLY ACQUIRED SOVIET-TYPE AIRCRAFT. THE VALUE OF SUCH AIRCRAFT, OF COUSE, WILL DEPEND UPON ADEQUACY OF MAINTENANCE; WE URGE SAUDIS TO CONSIDER WITH GOE HOW THIS MAY BE ASSURED. AT SOME FUTURE TIME, IT MAY BE SUEFUL FOR MODA AND USG TO DISCUSS WHAT KIND OF US-TYPE AIRCRAFT YAR MAY EVENTUALLY WISH TO ACQUIRE, AS WELL AS THEIR POSSIBLE SOURCE. IN MEANTIME, HOWEVER, TRAINING OF SELECTED YOUNGER YEMENI AIR CADETS COULD BEGIN AT KING FAISAL AIR ACADEMY. IF THERE ARE ANY YEMENI PILOTS TO SPARE, SAG MIGHT CONSIDER WITH YARG POSSIBILITY INCLUDING THEM IN F-5 PROGRAM AT DHAHRAN. USG RECOGNIZES POTENTIAL UTILITY OF HELICOPTER

FORCE IN YEMEN IN VIEW OF POOR COMMUNICATIONS AND RUGGED TERRAIN. WE WOULD POINT OUT, HOWEVER, THAT EXTENSIVE SUPPORT REQUIREMENTS OF SUCH AIRCRAFT COULD PROBABLY ONLY BE PROVIDED

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AT GREAT EXPENSE BY AN INCLUSIVE CONTRACT ARRANGEMENT (JIDDA 3538).

(D) YEMENI COAST GUARD: USG CONSIDERS QABBANI PROPOSALS FOR INSTITUTING YEMENI NAVY AT COST OF CIRCA 112 MILLION DOLLARS TO BE EXCESSIVELY LARGE. PRIORITIES FOR YEMEN'S SCARCE MANPOWER AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES SHOULD BE GIVEN INSTEAD TO DEVELOPMENT OF ARMY AND AFTERWARDS AIR FORCE. FOR THESE REASONS, PLUS LIMITED NATURE PDRY NAVAL THREAT, CONSIDER NEEDS OF YARG COULD BETTER BE SERVED BY SMALL AND EFFECTIVE COAST GUARD TYPE OF NAVAL FORCE. USG COAST GUARD ADVISORS STATIONED IN SAUDI ARABIA COULD MAKE SURVEY IN YAR TO DETERMINE WHAT ITS REQUIREMENT IN WAY OF TRAINING, EQUIPMENTZN AND INSTALLATIONS MIGHT BE. RESPONSIBILITY FOR IMPLEMENTING COAST GUARD ADVISORS' RECOMMENDATIONS, MIGHT WELL BE GIVEN TO PRIVATE CONTRACTOR, AS IS BEING DONE IN SAUDI ARABIA.

(E) FINANCING AND U.S. ASSITANCE: BECAUSE SULTAN HAS RECENTLY BEEN PEAKING IN GRANDILOQUENT TERMS ABOUT SAUDI/US LONG-TERM PROGRAM IN VICINITY ONE BILLION DOLLARS (REF E), WE SHOULD POINT OUT FIRMLY TO HIM LIMITATIONS ON ANY US FINANCIAL ROLE IN MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO YEMEN. (POINTS FIRST MADE AUGUST 7 BY AMBASSADOR THACHER -- REF B). SULTAN SHOULD BE TOLD NO MAP FUNDS ARE AUTHORIZED FOR YAR, NOR IS THERE ANY LIKELIHOOD THEY WILL BE IN FUTURE. WE ARE MOREOVER DOUBTFUL THAT YAR CAN OR SHOULD BE ASKED ASSUME LARGE ADDITIONAL DEBT BURDENS AT THIS TIME. IT IS FOR THESE REASONS, AMONG OTHERS, THAT US HAS STRESSED TO SAUDIS NEED TO BEAR PRINCIPAL FINANCIAL BURDEN FOR YAR, AND HAS ENCOURAGED YAR TO LOOK TO SAUDI ARABIA FOR MILITARY SUPPORT. WE SHOULD POINT OUT ALSO THAT US MILITARY ARE NOT TO BECOME DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN TRAINING OR SUPPORT ROLES IN YAR.

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ACTION SS-25

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P R 031450Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5090
INFO AMEMBASSY SANA
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

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EXDIS

DEPT PASS SECDEF FOR ISA
DHAHRAN PASS CHUSMTM

IF (WHEN) SULTAN ASKS WHAT IS TO BE NATURE OF USG'S CONTRIBUTION, RECOMMEND WE REPLY (1) WE REMAIN WILLING TO PROVIDE ON FMS CASH BASIS SERVICES OF MTT'S TO HELP TRAIN SAUDI INSTRUCTORS TO TEACH YEMENIS OPERATION/MAINTENANCE OF SMALL ARMS AND OTHER BASIC EQUIPMENT. (SAUDIS MAY WISH TO DELEGATE THIS TASK TO JORDANIANS -- AS MENTIONED ABOVE -- OR, ALTERNATIVELY, SHARE IT WITH THEM); (2) YAR HAS BEEN MADE ELEGIBLE FOR MILITARY PURCHASES FROM US, AND WE PREPARED TO MAKE CERTAIN FMS CASH SALES OF EQUIPMENT IF SAG WISHES TO FINANCE; (3) BULK OF US ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION TO YEMEN HAS BEEN ON CIVILIAN DEVELOPMENTAL SIDE, AND AS POINTED OUT BY AMBASSADOR THACHER'S LETTER TO FOREIGN MINISTRY AUGUST 15 (OF WHICH COPY PROVIDED SULTAN) ALL FORMS OF US ASSISTANCE TO YEMEN IN 15 MONTHS APRIL 1973 TO JUNE 1974 AMOUNTS TO MORE THAN 31 MILLION DOLLARS; (4) US WILL CONTINUE TO HELP COORDINATE RESPONSES OF REGIONAL NATURE TO YARG'S NEEDS AS IT HAS DONE IN PAST.

(F) RECENT PROPOSALS BY GOJ: IT MAY BE APPROPRIATE TO MENTION THAT WE CONSIDER GOJ PROGRAM FOR MILITARY AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO YEMEN (REF F) A GOOD BARGAIN IN VIEW OF ITS SPECIFICITY, PRACTICALITY, AND IMPACT/COST

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RATION. WOULD APPRECIATE, HOWEVER, WASHINGTON COMMENT ON WHETHER WE PLAN TO ASK SAG TO PICK UP RELATIVELY SMALL ANNUAL TAB OF MAXIMUM 745,892 JDS ANNUALLY. SOME OF FOREGOING MAY NOT BE TO LIKING PRINCE SULTAN, AND HE MIGHT WELL CONSIDER PROVOCATIVE A PRESENTATION THAT ENDED BY OUR ATTEMPT TO TOUCH HIM FOR WHAT WOULD SEEM A PALTRY SUM. BELIEVE IT IMPORTANT, THEREFORE, THAT YARG TAKE INITIATIVE IN APPROACHING SULTAN UNLESS IT PREFERENCES TO APPROACH ONE OF ITS FRIENDS IN GULF. WE SHOULD BE PREPARED TO SUPPORT APPROACH IF APPROPRIATE.

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